

Minutes of the Westford Recycling Commission

Meeting date and time: October 11, 2007, 7:30 p.m.

Location: Cameron Senior Center

Attendees: Andy and Joanne Bergamini, Ellen Harde, Elizabeth Sawyer, and Barbara Theriault.

Note that if Action Items from a previous month's minutes were closed before this meeting, they are not included in the minutes. They may be referenced in past minutes under Action Items and considered closed without discussion.

I. Action Items are due by November 8 meeting. Previous (open) action items are in bold.

ALL

- 1. Continue surveillance of cardboard pickup infractions and forward evidence to Andy.**

ABBY

- 1. Assemble a list of community based organizations.**

ANDY

- 1. Draft a letter to Acme Waste Systems to notify them that \$100 fines will be imposed for cardboard pickup infractions. (On hold.)**
- 2. Research the liabilities of having a blog on the WRC web site. (In process.)**
3. Contact IPR about recycling sealed air bags and plastic recyclable sleeves, and about small business recycling program incentives.
4. Call Jennifer Almeida, Chelmsford Recycling Coordinator, to discuss our position on not hiring an intern at this time.
5. Distribute recycling toters to Nashoba Tech if they are still needed (from Gerry's action item).
6. Work with **Ellen** and **Joanne** to create an information sheet for residents at electronics collections.

BARBARA

1. Submit September 13, 2007, meeting minutes to the Town Clerk.
2. Write a draft of the October 11, 2007, meeting minutes and email to members.
- 3. Submit cable bulletin board messages and articles for the Westford Eagle and Lowell Sun on recycling topics, e.g., Earth Machine, cardboard, compact fluorescents.**
- 4. Write a press release for the Westford Eagle on the subject of waste bans and the town policy re recycling.**
5. Call a Westford Youth Soccer official to find out when fall program ends re collecting bottle toters.
6. Arrange to have **Ellen** and **Kris** sign an appreciation card and sent to Gerry.
7. Email Rosemarie Koester about helping with the remaining yard waste collections.
8. Find out if Olympia Sports has a sneaker recycling program.

ELIZABETH

1. Prepare a November meeting agenda referring to the minutes and WRC calendar of tasks/events. Add items about handling Best Buy appreciation and small business recycling.
2. Learn more about Ace Hardware's program of recycling compact fluorescents.
3. Contact Carolyn Dann at the DEP for guidance on submitting MRIP proposals.
4. Make a change on the web site to delete Nike from sneaker recycling and also suggest that people put used sneakers in Planet Aid bins.
5. Order 500 18-gallon recycling bins.

ELLEN

1. Pay **Kris** for the remaining WRC shirt and keep it on hand for a buyer.
- 2. Continue to monitor recycling programs in all the schools.**
3. Take a box of change to the Brush Collection on October 13 and work for about an hour.
4. Thank Best Buy for their electronics recycling grant money.

5. Work with **Andy** and **Joanne** on an information sheet to hand out at recycling collections.

KRIS

1. Determine when and where to have group photo taken wearing WRC shirts.
2. Work with **Barbara** on placing recycling bin(s) in the Meeting Room of the library.

II. Key Points/Decisions from the Meeting (following the printed agenda)

1. The September meeting minutes were approved and will be forwarded to the Town Clerk by **Barbara**.
2. Fall recycling events
 - a. Brush collections October 13 and 20. The location will be at the new Highway Garage and there will be a \$10 fee per load. **Ellen** volunteered to go at 10:30 with a box of change and stay for an hour before handing over the collection of fees to an employee. **Elizabeth** might be able to help.
 - b. Yard waste.
 - 1) **Ellen** spoke to Richie Rocketenetz about the September 22 collection which went smoothly and took less than an hour.
 - 2) Because of low participation on September 22, we will consider not holding a yard waste collection next September but keep the dates in October, November and December.
 - 3) **Elizabeth** updated the WRC web site with a curbside leaf pickup option offered by Red Wagon Landscaping.
 - 4) **Barbara** will contact Rosemarie Koester for help in collecting checks and mailing confirmation postcards to residents for the remaining three yard waste collections.
3. Follow up on the grants
 - a. Best Buy.
 - 1) After submitting a grant application, we received a check for \$750 from Best Buy in appreciation of our electronics recycling efforts. It will be added to our recycling revolving account. **Ellen** spoke with a Best Buy representative who explained there are no strings attached to the use of the money. However, if we can make mention of Best Buy in some way they would appreciate it. Also, they would be interested in having a report on our electronics collection, e.g., how many cars came.
 - 2) Some suggestions that were made about mentioning Best Buy included sticking a Best Buy decal on sign boards; mentioning them in public relations messages; and handing out a sheet to residents at the collection with information on where the electronics go to be recycled and that a Best Buy grant was awarded the town. **Andy** made the latter suggestion and volunteered with **Ellen** and **Joanne** to create the information sheet.
 - b. Recycling intern. After discussing the feasibility of participating in a program of sharing an intern with Chelmsford, **Andy** made a motion that the WRC does not support the concept of having an intern at this time because of the town's hiring freeze and the requirement that the town pick up the salary for the next phase of the program. It was seconded and passed. **Andy** will contact Jennifer Almeida, the recycling coordinator in Chelmsford, to inform her.
4. Divvying up Gerry's responsibilities

Gerry DiBello has resigned from the Westford Recycling Commission. He had several areas of responsibility that have been reassigned as follows:

 - a. Content changes to the WRC web site. **Elizabeth** volunteered.
 - b. MRIP and other paperwork. WRC will work together. **Elizabeth** will contact Carolyn Dann at the DEP for guidance.
 - c. Schools (shared with **Ellen**). **Ellen** will continue alone and call on WRC for help if needed.
 - d. Electronics collections for next year. **Andy** volunteered.
 - e. Sneakers disposition from collections. **Ellen** took the last batch of used sneakers from

September 22 collection and put them in the Planet Aid box as they accept shoes. In the future, we will not say the sneakers go to Nike. **Elizabeth** will make a change on the web site and also advocate for people putting used sneakers in the Planet Aid bins. **Barbara** will check with Olympia Sports to see if they recycle old sneakers. We will continue to find outlets for used sneakers.

The WRC shirt that Gerry ordered will be paid for by **Ellen** and held until someone wants it.

5. Enforcing the waste ban on cardboard/recyclables.

Ellen spoke to Richie Rocketenetz (when he was at her house) about the WRC closely monitoring the cardboard situation, i.e., not to pick up cardboard left with the trash. Richie explained that the trucks leave the yard every morning with the stickers and that he personally does not want them to pick up the cardboard. We will continue to watch for infractions and let **Andy** know about them.

6. Ordering 18-gallon recycling bins.

Elizabeth raised the question of how many bins to order since it seems to be taking longer to disperse them, possibly because the toters are now available. The best price break is for 1000 bins but it may be too many. There is no issue with storage because there is plenty of space at the old highway garage. We passed a motion to order 500 bins at this time. If there is a significantly higher cost, we could add a dollar to the price of the bins residents purchase at Town Hall.

7. Businesses and paper recycling.

Last month **Ellen** suggested a way to support small businesses that wanted to recycle paper by underwriting their first year from WRC revolving funds. **Andy** spoke to the fact that businesses are paying a residential tax rate and not a higher business rate and that saves them money. They could take that savings and assume a responsibility to recycle paper. He will talk to Christine at IPR about considering a pilot program of giving small businesses an introductory price on paper recycling pick ups to help get them started. Our next step is to have a discussion when **Kris** is present as she is the liaison to the real estate offices which generate a lot of paper.

8. Other business

- a. **Ellen** reported that New England Clothes Recycling sent us a \$150 check for collections from bins placed on town property.
- b. **Ellen** also reported we can expect a \$700 check from Wheelabrator for the large quantity of fluorescents recycled by the School Department. In addition, Richie Crocker of the School Dept. called Clean Harbors to remove hazardous waste that had collected on school property.
- c. **Ellen** passed on to **Elizabeth** the task of looking into Ace Hardware's program of collecting compact fluorescents and informing them of our program with Wheelabrator.
- d. After discussion, we decided to place bottle toters at additional ball fields: Abbot in the spring of 2008 and Westford Academy in the spring of 2009. **Barbara** will contact the head of Westford Youth Soccer to find out the last date of play on the fields so the bottle toters can be picked up.
- e. After questions raised by **Barbara**, **Andy** will inquire of IPR their policy on recycling packing air pillows (#4), and also plastic sleeves that are marked with a recycling logo without a number.
- f. **Kris** will continue to work with the library staff about placing a recycling bin in the Meeting Room.
- g. **Andy** has placed a call to Town Counsel to discuss the legal implications of having a blog on the recycling web site.
- h. **Elizabeth** talked with Mike Sawyer about creating a blog on the WRC web site. Mike suggested his redesign of the site makes it quicker and easier to inform people and that we may not need to pursue a blog at this time.
- i. In a conversation with Christine at IPR, **Andy** was assured that two, not one, toters will be delivered to households along with an explanatory paper.

9. Action Item review (see I above).

10. Close out meeting

- a. The October meeting of the Westford Recycling Commission adjourned at 8:50 p.m.
- b. The next meeting of the Westford Recycling Commission is scheduled for November 8, 2007, at 7:30 p.m. at the Cameron Senior Center. **Elizabeth** will create the agenda. **Barbara** will take notes. **Andy** will chair the meeting.

III. Other items for future discussion

1. Feasibility of a Collect Everything Day.
2. Construction waste bans.
3. Using/promoting recycled products.

IV. List of Accomplishments prior to 2007 is included in minutes for that year (starting in 2006).

V. List of Accomplishments 2007

1. Delivered new resident recycling information packets to local realtors in January and July.
2. Held electronics collection March 31.
3. Held the first used sneakers collection March 31.
4. Distributed bottle recycling totes to Jack Walsh Field (2) and Veterans' Memorial Field (2).
5. Participated in town Step it Up event with recycling and composting information tables April 14.
6. Held brush collections April 21 and 28.
7. Organized Town Wide Litter Collection April 21-22.
8. Placed compact fluorescent and button battery boxes at collection points in town (April).
9. Spoke to Nabnasset School kindergarten classes about recycling April 27.
10. Managed a spring yard waste pickup for subscribers April 28.
11. Participated in the Water Department Open House with recycling information (rain barrels, composters) May 9.
12. Posted a poem about recycling cardboard on the Westford.com web site banner (May).
13. Held electronics/old sneakers collections on June 23 and September 22.
14. Held document shredding events on June 23 and September 22.
15. Mailed 2007-2008 Recycling Guides to residents.
16. Dispensed information on recycling and composting at the Farmer's Market on Town Common.
17. Managed fall yard waste pickups for subscribers September 22 (October 27, November 10, and December 1 still to come).

Respectfully submitted,
Barbara Theriault
Secretary 10/11/2007